

that wonderful prophecy in the light of its fulfillment in Christ. "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of dry ground." Where was there ever a fairer plant that grew from so hard and unpromising surroundings as did Christ. Nazareth was proverbial for wickedness. Yet it was the home of Christ until after he began his mission. "He is despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Many have been the men of whom that might have been said in a sense but of whom is it so eminently true as of Jesus the Christ? "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him smitten of God and afflicted." Of whom was that true but of Jesus? In the very course of bearing their sorrows and sins the Jews thought he was suffering the just condemnation not only of themselves, but also of God. The whole chapter is so explicit in the prophetic delineation of the Messiah whose coming was then more than eight centuries in the future, that I would fain carry the examination farther, were it not for the limits of this paper.

Hear Jeremiah saying as his prophetic vision pierced the future, "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a king shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our Righteousness*." Jer. 23:5. And the prophet repeats the same prophecy in Jer. 33:15, 16, and there adds, "For thus saith the Lord: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel: neither shall the priests, the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings and to do sacrifice continually." Jer. 31:31-34 is also Messianic, in that it describes the New Covenant revealed in Jesus. Ezekiel also speaks of the "everlasting covenant" which God would make with Israel in Eze. 16:60.

In Eze. 17:22-24 we have Christ prefigured in a prophecy, "Thus saith the Lord God: I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar (Israel and Judah) and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it." Here it is evident from the context that the highest branch refers to the best part of the captives in Assyria and Babylon and the tender twig, in my humble judgment was fulfilled in no other than Jesus Christ. Hear Ezekiel say again in speaking of Zedekiah, then reigning king in Jerusalem, "And thou profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God: remove the diadem and take off the crown; this shall not be the same; exalt him that is low and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn,

overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it to him." Eze. 21:25-27. Isn't it passing strange that from that time until Jesus came not a king sat on the throne of Israel or Judah? Again, "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them." Eze. 34:23, 24. How would you interpret that beside John 10, where Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd?" Again in Ezekiel 37:24, 25, it is written, "And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd; and they shall also walk in my judgments and observe my statutes to do them. * * * and my servant David shall be their prince forever."

Daniel says, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7:13, 14. Of whom could that be true but of Jesus who will come in the clouds of heaven, whose kingdom is constantly increasing and which promises even according to man's short-sightedness to abide forever? In Dan. 9:24-27 is a most specific prophecy concerning the Messiah and his kingdom.

Joel 2:28-32 gives a very vivid prophecy concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

But hear the prophet Micah over seven centuries previous to the coming of Christ in indicating the place where Christ should be born, say, "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, tho thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." That this was understood by the Jews themselves as prophetic of the birthplace of the Christ is witnessed by the fact that when Herod inquired of the chief priests and scribes where Christ should be born they immediately said in Bethlehem and quoted this very passage as the reason of their belief. Now, I should like to ask those who scoff at prophecy and the inspiration of the Bible, Isn't it very strange that the fanciful interpretations of the scribes and lawyers of the Jews were in exact accordance with the facts as they happened? It must be remembered, furthermore, that these chief priests and scribes were not friendly to the lowly Jesus. Haggai, one of the prophets of the Restoration speaking concerning the temple then about to be built said, "And I will shake all nations and the desire of all nations shall come." Zechariah a contemporary of Haggai addressing the high priest of the new temple says, "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows

that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at: for behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch." And again, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy king cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass and upon a colt the foal of an ass." This was quoted by both Matthew and John as fulfilled by Christ when he rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The same prophet representing the nature of the kingdom of Christ says, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness." Zech. 13:1. And finally Malachi the last of the prophets until John looking thro four centuries of sin, of national disgrace and national despair lighted only by the faint glimmer of hope inspired by the brave but fated Maccabees saw the Messiah who came to redeem them from their career of mingled hope and despair, of righteousness and sin, and wrote of Him thus, "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire and fuller's soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Mal. 3:1-3. And in closing his prophecy he says, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

I have merely opened the great subject of Christ in prophecy. Volumes could be written with profit on this theme. The great subject of Christ in the law, I have because of the very limitations of this paper left wholly untouched. It is fully as rich a field as the one chosen, but I leave it for future discussion. As I have studied this subject it has become clear why the early preachers and writers made such frequent use of prophecy. It is the store house of promise. Let us as preachers in this infidel age emulate their example. We do not study the prophets enough, both for instruction and by way of learning a style of preaching which has withstood the iron tooth of almost forty centuries of time. Therein we see the immortal hope that stirred the best spirits of those far distant ages, which they looked for but which you and I have seen fulfilled. True, prophecy may be abused and wrested, but like every good thing given by God it serves its purpose by use, not abuse. If this paper stirs within your hearts a greater desire to study the prophets of the Bible, one of the objects of its composition will have been gained. If, on the other hand, it shall make more clear to any of you that Jesus is the central figure of the world's history, of human life and of your life, the other object will have been attained unto. I pray God that thus it may be blessed.